اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi

Surah 43 – Az-Zukhruf (The Ornaments of Gold)

سُوْرَةُ الزُّخْرُفِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate)

حٰمٓ

(43-1) Ha. Mim.

وَ الْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ

(43-2) By the Clear Book;

اِنَّا جَعَلْنٰهُ قُرْءٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ

(43-3) verily We have made it an Arabic Qur'an that you may understand. (1)

(1) The object of taking an oath by the Quran is to impress this fact: We are the Author of this Book and not Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the attribute of the Quran chosen for the oath is that it is a lucid Scripture. To swear by the Quran itself with this attribute in order to impress that the Quran is divine Word by itself implies this: O people, this is an open Book before you. Read it intelligently. Its clear and un-ambiguous themes, its language and literary style, its teaching which distinguishes the truth from falsehood, all are testifying to the fact that none but the Lord of the Universe could be its Author. Then the sentence: “Indeed, We made it a Quran in Arabic that you might understand” has two meanings:

(1) It is not in any foreign tongue but in your own language; therefore, you can have no difficulty in assessing its value and worth. Had it been in a non-Arabic language, you could have offered the excuse that you could not determine its being divine, or otherwise, for you did not understand it. But you cannot offer this excuse about this Arabic Quran. Its each word is clear to

you, its each passage and discourse, both in language and in theme, is plain for you. Now you may see it for yourself whether this could be the word of Muhammad (peace be upon him) or of some other Arab.

(2) We have sent this Book in Arabic because We are addressing the Arabs, who can only understand an Arabic Quran. The person who disregards this expressly rational ground for sending down the Quran in Arabic and regards it as the word of Muhammad (peace be upon him) instead of divine Word only because Muhammad's mother tongue is also Arabic, commits a grave injustice. (To understand this second meaning, please see (Surah Ha Meem As-Sajdah, Ayat 44 and its E.N).

وَ اِنَّهٗ فِیْۤ اُمِّ الْكِتٰبِ لَدَیْنَا لَعَلِیٌّ حَكِیْمٌ ﴿۴﴾

(43-4) Indeed it is transcribed in the Original Book with Us; (2) sublime and full of wisdom. (3)

(2) Umm al-Kitab: the "Original Book": the Book from which all the Books sent down to the Prophets have been derived. In Surah Al-Waqiah the same thing has been described as Kitab-um-Maknun (the hidden and preserved Book) and in (Surah Al-Buruj, Ayat 22) as Lauh-i Mahfuz (the preserved tablet), that is, the tablet whose writing cannot be effaced, which is secure from every kind of interference. By saying that the Quran is inscribed in Umm al-Kitab, attention has been drawn to an important truth. Different Books had been revealed by Allah in different ages to different Prophets for the guidance of different nations in different languages, but all these Books invited mankind to one and the same faith. They regarded one and the same thing as the truth. They presented one and the same criterion of good and evil. They propounded the same principles of morality and civilization. In short, they brought one and the same Deen (religion). The reason was that their source and origin was the same, only words were different; they had the same meaning and theme which is inscribed in a Source Book with Allah, and whenever there was a need, He raised a Prophet and sent down the same meaning and subject-matter clothed in a particular diction according to the environment and occasion. Had Allah willed to raise the Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him) in another nation instead of the Arabs, He would have sent down the same Quran in the language of that nation. In it the meaning and content would have been expressed according to the environments and conditions of the people and land. The words would have been different and the language also different but the teaching and guidance the same basically, and it would be the same Quran though not the Arabic Quran. This same thing has been expressed in Surah Ash-Shuara, thus: This (Book) has been revealed by the Lord of the worlds. The trustworthy Spirit has come down with it upon your heart so that you may become one of those who are (appointed by God) to warn (the people) in plain Arabic language, and this is also contained in the scriptures of the former peoples. (Verses 192-196). (For explanation, see (Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 192-196) and the E.Ns thereof).

(3) This sentence is related both to Kitab-i mubin and to Umm al-Kitab. Thus, it is in praise of both the Quran and the Original Book from which the Quran has been derived. This praise is meant to impress the fact that if a person does not recognize the true worth of this Book and does not benefit from its wise teachings because of his own folly, it would be his own misfortune. If someone tried to degrade it and found fault with it, it would be his own meanness. It cannot become worthless on account of someone’s lack of appreciation of it, and its wisdom cannot be eclipsed by anyone’s throwing dust at it. This is by itself a glorious Book, which stands exalted by its matchless teaching, miraculous eloquence, faultless wisdom and the sublime personality of its great Author. Therefore, none can succeed in minimizing its value and worth. In(Verse 44) below the Quraish in particular and the Arabs in general have been told that the revelation of the Book for which they are showing such lack of appreciation had provided them a unique opportunity of honor, which if they lost, would subject them to a severe accountability before God. (See E.N. 39) below.

اَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا اَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّسْرِفِيْنَ ۝٥

(43-5) Should We divert this Good Counsel from you because you are a people immersed in extravagance? [4]

(4) In this one sentence the entire history that had taken place since the time the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had proclaimed to be a Prophet till the revelation of these verses during the past few years has been compressed. This sentence depicts the following picture: A nation has been involved in ignorance, backwardness and depravity for centuries. Suddenly, Allah looks at it with favor. He raises in it an illustrious guide and sends down His own Word to take it out of the darkness of ignorance so that it is aroused from slumber, it gives up superstitions of ignorance and it becomes aware of the truth and adopts the right way of life. But the ignorant people of the nation and the tribal chiefs turn hostile to the guide, and try their utmost to defeat him and his mission. With the passage of time their hostility and mischief go on increasing; so much so that they make up their mind to kill him. At this, it is being said: Should We stop making any efforts to reform you because you are proving to be unworthy people? Should We withhold sending down this Admonition, and leave you lying in the same wretched state in which you have been lying since centuries? Do you really think that should be the demand of Our Mercy? Have you ever considered what doom you would meet when you have turned down the bounty of Allah and persisted in falsehood after the truth has come before you?

وَكَمْ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَّبِیٍّ فِی الْاَوَّلِیْنَ ۶

(43-6) How many a Prophet did We send to the earlier peoples!

وَمَا یَاْتِیْهِمْ مِّنْ نَّبِیٍّ اِلَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ یَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ۷

(43-7) Yet never did a Prophet come to them but they mocked him. [5]

(5) That is, if such absurdity and senselessness had barred the sending of a Prophet or a Book, no Prophet would ever have come to any nation nor a Book sent to it.

فَاَ ۫لَكْنَا اَشَدَّ مِنْهُ بَطْشًا وَّ مَضٰى مَثَلُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ۝٨

(43-8) We utterly destroyed them although they were greater in might than these. The examples of ancient peoples have gone before. (6)

(6) That is, the result of the senselessness of some particular people could not be that the entire mankind should be deprived of the guidance of the Prophethood and the Book. The result has always been that the worshippers of falsehood, with the pride of power, did not desist from mocking the Prophets and were ultimately destroyed. When Allah's wrath descended upon the people, those who possessed thousands of times greater power than that possessed by the chiefs of the Quraish, they were crushed to annihilation like mosquitoes and fleas.

وَ لَئِنْ سَاَلْتَهُمْ مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضَ لَيَقُوْلُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيْزُ الْعَلِيْمُ ۝٩

(43-9) Yet if you were to ask them: "Who created the heavens and the earth?" they will certainly say: "The All-Mighty, the All-Knowing has created them."

الَّذِىْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْاَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَّ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيْهَا سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ۝١٠

(43-10) He it is Who made this earth for you a cradle (7) and made in it pathways (8) for you that you may find the way to your destination; (9)

(7) At other places the earth has been described as a bed, but here as a cradle. That is, just as a child lies resting in its cradle, so is this great globe meant to be a place of rest for you, which is suspended in space, which is spinning on its axis at a speed of 1,000 miles an hour, which is revolving around the sun at a speed of 66,000 miles an hour. Its interior is so intensely hot that it can

melt the stones and sometimes it manifests its power in the form of volcano eruptions. But, in spite of that, the Creator has made it so tranquil that one sleeps on it in fill peace and there is no jerk whatsoever. One lives on it and does not at all feel that this globe is suspended and he is hanging from it with his head pointing downward. One moves about on it with satisfaction and never thinks that he is riding on a vehicle moving faster than a bullet. You dig it at will and turn it inside out and beat it as you like to obtain your sustenance. Whereas, a little shaking of it in an earthquake makes you feel what a terrible giant it is, which Allah has subdued for you. (For further explanation, see (Surah Al-Naml, Ayat 61 and E.N. 74) of it.

(8) The passes in the mountains and the rivers in the hill and plain regions are the natural paths, which Allah has provided on the surface of the earth. Man has spread on the earth by means of these. If the mountainous ranges had been created erect, without a crevice, and there had been no rivers and streams, man would have been confined to the same areas where he was born. Then, Allah through another grace has not made the entire surface of the earth uniform in nature, but has created different marks of distinction by means of which man recognizes different lands and feels the difference between one land and another. This is the second important means by which man became able to move about on the earth. This blessing can be appreciated by the one who has had a chance of going on a vast desert, where for thousands of milts the earth is without any landmarks and one does not know where one has reached and where one has to go.

(9) This sentence gives two meanings simultaneously:

(1) That by means of these natural paths and landmarks you may find your way and reach the place you want to reach.

(2) That you may obtain guidance from the observation of this craftsmanship of Allah Almighty. May reach the underlying reality and understand that this system of the earth is not functioning haphazardly, nor has been devised by many gods jointly, but there is one All-Wise Creator, Who has made these

paths in the hills and on the plains in view of the needs and requirements of His creatures, and has given each region of the earth a different form in countless different ways by means of which man can distinguish one region from the other.

وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً بِقَدَرٍ فَاَنشَرْنَا بِهٖ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا كَذٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُوْنَ ﴿١١﴾

(43-11) He Who sent down water from the sky in a determined measure, (10) and thereby We revived a dead land: likewise will you be raised up (from the earth) (11)

(10) That is, for each region He has ordained an average measure of the rain which falls year after year for long ages regularly. It does not happen that an area may have two inches of the rainfall one year and 200 inches of it the next year. Then He spreads the rainfall over different places in different times in such a way that it becomes beneficial on the whole for the products of the earth. And this is also His wisdom that He has deprived some parts of the earth of the rainfall almost entirely and turned them into dry barren deserts, and in some other parts, He sometimes causes famines to occur and sometimes sends torrential rains so that man may know what a great blessing the rain and its general regularity is for the populated areas, and he may also remember that this system is under the control of another power, whose decrees cannot be changed by anyone. No one has the power that he may change the general average of the rainfall of a country, or effect a variation in its distribution over vast areas of the earth, or avert an impending storm, or attract the clouds towards his own land and compel them to rain. (For further explanation, see (Surah Al-Hijr, Ayats 21-22); (Surah Al- Muminun, Ayats 18-20).

(11) Here, the birth of vegetation in the earth by means of water has been presented as an argument for two things simultaneously:

(1) That these things are happening by the power and wisdom of One God; no one else is His associate in these works.

(2) That there can be life after death and it will be. (For further explanation, see (Surah An-Nahl, Ayats 65-67); (Surah Al-Hajj, Ayats 5-7); (Surah An-Naml, Ayat 60); (Surah Ar-Rum, Ayats 19, 24); (Surah Fatir E.N. 19) and (Surah Ya Sin E.N. 29).

وَالَّذِیۡ خَلَقَ الۡاَزۡوَاجَ کُلَّہَا وَ جَعَلَ لَکُمۡ مِّنَ الۡفُلۡکِ وَ الۡاَنۡعَامِ مَا تَرۡکَبُوۡنَ ۙ﴿۱۲﴾

(43-12) He Who created these pairs, (12) all of them, and provided you ships and cattle on which you ride,

(12) Pairs here does not imply only pairs of men and women among human beings and of males and females among animals and vegetation, but there are countless other things which the Creator has made as matching partners of each other and by whose coming together and combination new and ever new things come into being in the world. For example, among the elements, some can be combined with others and some cannot be combined. The combination of those which can combine is resulting into various compositions, e.g. the negative and positive charges in electricity are the matching partners of each other and their mutual attraction is causing wonderful things to happen in the world. If man considers the structure and the mutual relationships and the different forms of cooperation and the results of the combination of this and other countless pairs which Allah has created among countless of His creations. He cannot help testifying to the truth that this great workshop of the world is the creation of one and only one Almighty, All-Wise Designer, and is functioning only under His care and control. Only a man of mean intelligence could suppose that all this happened, and is happening, without a Wise Being, or there is the possibility in it of the agency and interference of more than one God.

لِتَسۡتَوٗا عَلٰی ظُہُوۡرِہٖ ثُمَّ تَذۡکُرُوۡا نِعۡمَۃَ رَبِّکُمۡ اِذَا اسۡتَوَیۡتُمۡ عَلَیۡہِ وَ تَقُوۡلُوۡا سُبۡحٰنَ الَّذِیۡ سَخَّرَ لَنَا ہٰذَا وَ مَا کُنَّا لَہٗ مُقۡرِنِیۡنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

(43-13) so that when you are mounted upon them you may remember the bounty of your Lord, and say: “Glory be to

Him Who has subjected this to Us whereas we did not have the strength to subdue it. (13)

(13) That is, only man from among all the creatures of the earth has been given this power by Allah to use boats and ships and animals as conveyance. Should he never think and be grateful as to who it is who created possibilities for him to run boats in the mighty oceans, and who created some animals, among the countless kinds of animals, with a nature that they become his servants in spite of being far stronger than him in power, so he ride on them and drive them wherever he likes. To benefit by these blessings and to forget the Benefactor is a sign of the heart's becoming dead and the conscience's being insensitive. For, when a man endowed with a living heart and a sensitive conscience will sit on these conveyances, he will be filled with the feelings of the blessings and with the gratitude for it, and will cry out: Glorified is the Being Who subjected these things to me. Glorified is He from that another should be His associate in His Being and attributes and powers. Glorified is He and free from the weakness that He should become helpless of performing the functions of His Godhead by Himself and should stand in need of other associate gods. Glorified is He that I should make another an associate with Him in rendering thanks for these blessings.

The best practical commentary of the intention and meaning of this verse are the words that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pronounce at the time he sat on the conveyance. Abdullah bin Umar says that whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) sat on a conveyance for a journey, he would pronounce Allahu-Akbar three times, then would recite this verse, and then pray: O God, I implore You to grant me in this journey the grace of goodness and piety and such acts as may please You. O God, make the journey easy and roll up the long distance for us. O God, You alone are the Companion during the journey and Guardian of the family in our absence. O God, take care of us during the journey and our household in our absence. (Musnad Ahmed, Muslim, Abu Daud, Nasai, Darimi, Tirmidhi).

Ali says: Once the Prophet (peace be upon him) put his foot in the stirrup with Bismillah, and then, after riding, said: Alhamdu-lillah subhan-alladhi sakhkhara lana hadha . . . . , then pronounced Alhamdu-lillah three times, and Allahu- Akbar three times; then said: Subhana-ka la-ilaha illa anta, qad zalamtu nafsi faghfir-li. Then he laughed. I asked: What made you laugh. O Messenger of Allah? He replied: When a servant says: Rabb-ighfir-li, Allah Almighty is very pleased with this. He says: My servant knows that there is none beside Me who can forgive sins. (Ahmed, Abu Daud, Tirmidhi, Nasai, and others)

Abu Mijlaz says: Once I rode on my animal and recited this verse: Subhan-alladhi sakhkhara lane hadha . . ., Hasan said: Have you been commanded to say so? I said: What should I say then? He replied: Say, thank God, Who guided us to Islam: Thanks to Him, Who did us a favor by sending Muhammad (peace be upon him): Thanks to Him Who admitted us into the best community that has been raised for the people; then recite this verse. (Ibn Jarir, Ahkam al- Quran by Jassas).

وَ اِنَّاۤ اِلٰی رَبِّنَا لَمُنۡقَلِبُوۡنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

(43-14) It is to our Lord that we shall eventually return.” (14)

(14) That is, while embarking on every journey one should remember that there is ahead a longer and final journey also. Besides there is the possibility in the use of every conveyance that an accident may turn that very journey into one’s last journey; therefore, every time one should remember his return to his Lord so that if something unexpected happens, he does not die unaware.

Let us pause here for a while and consider the moral results of this teaching. Can one imagine that a person who while sitting on a conveyance starts his journey consciously with full remembrance of Allah and his return and accountability before Him, would commit sins and injustices and tyrannies on the way? Can a person think or utter these words from his mouth when he

intends to go to meet a prostitute, or to visit a club for the purpose of drinking and gambling? Can a ruler, or a government official, or a merchant who has stepped out of his house with such thoughts and such words at his lips, usurp the rights of others when he reaches his destination? Can a soldier utter these words while boarding his aircraft or tank when he goes out to shed blood of the innocent and deprive the weak of their freedom? If not, then this one thing alone is enough to bar every movement undertaken for the commission of a sin.

وَ جَعَلُوا لَهٗ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖ جُزْءًا ؕ اِنَّ الْاِنْسٰنَ لَكَفُوْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ؕ ﴿۱۵﴾

(43-15) Yet they have made some of His servants a part of Him. [15] Indeed man is most evidently thankless.

(15) "Assign to some of His slaves a share with Him" implies declaring a servant of Allah His offspring, for an offspring inevitably is homogeneous with and a part of the father's body, and regarding somebody as Allah's son or daughter means that he or she is being made a partner in Allah's Being. Besides, another form of making a creature a part of Allah is that it should be regarded as possessor of the attributes and powers as are specifically Allah's own, and it should be invoked under the same concept, or rites of worship performed before it, or its sanctities observed and regarded as imperative and binding. For, in that case man divides divinity and provider between Allah and His servants and hands over a part of it to the servants.

اَمِ اتَّخَذَ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ بَنٰتٍ وَّ اَصْفٰىكُمْ بِالْبَنِيْنَ ﴿۱۶﴾

(43-16) Has Allah taken for Himself daughters out of those whom He creates and has chosen you to have sons? [16]

(16) Here, the folly of the polytheists of Arabia has been fully exposed. They said that the angels were the daughters of Allah. They had carved out their images as females, and these were their goddesses whom they worshiped. About this Allah says: In the first place, in spite of knowing and recognizing that the Creator of the earth and heavens is Allah and it is He Who has

made this earth a cradle for you and it is He Who sends down the rain from the sky, and it is He Who has created these animals for your service, yet you have taken others as gods beside Him, whereas those whom you serve as deities are not God but creatures of God. Then, furthermore, you have made some of the servants associates of Allah not only in His attributes but in His Being as well, and invented the creed that they were Allah's offspring. Then, not resting content with this, you assigned to Allah that kind of the offspring which you regard as disgraceful for your own selves. When a daughter is born in your house, your face grows dark, you feel distressed, and sometimes you bury her alive. This offspring you assign to Allah and reserve for yourselves the sons, whom you regard as a source of joy and pride. Even then you claim that you believe in Allah.

وَ اِذَا بُشِّرَ اَحَدُهُم بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهٗ مُسْوَدًّا وَّ هُوَ كَظِيْمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

(43-17) (They believe so although when) any of them is given tidings of the birth of a female child the like of which he assigns to the Merciful One, his countenance darkens and he is choked with grief.

اَوَ مَنْ يُّنَشَّؤُا فِى الْحِلْيَةِ وَ هُوَ فِى الْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِيْنٍ ﴿١٨﴾

(43-18) Do they assign to Allah one who grows up amidst ornaments and is not well-versed in the art of disputation? (17)

(17) In other words, You have assigned to Allah the offspring that is by nature delicate, weak and frail, and adopted for yourselves the offspring that is bold, courageous and fearless. This verse shows permissibility of the ornaments for the women, for Allah has mentioned the ornaments as a natural thing for them. The same is also confirmed by the Hadith. Imam Ahmad, Abu Daud and Nasai have related on the authority of Ali that the Prophet (peace be upon him) took silk in one hand and gold in the other and said that both were forbidden to be used in dress by the men of his Ummah. Tirmidhi and Nasai have related from Abu Musa Ashari a tradition, saying that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Silk and gold have been forbidden for the men but

made lawful for the women of my Ummah. Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas has discussed this question in his Ahkam ai-Quran and related the following traditions:

Aishah says: Once Usamah, son of Zaid bin Harithah, was hurt and started bleeding. The Prophet (peace be upon him) loved him like his own children. He sucked his blood and spat it out, and cheered him saying: Had Usamah been a daughter we would have adorned him with ornaments! Had Usamah been a daughter, we would have dressed him in fine clothes!

Abu Musa Ashari has related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Wearing of silken clothes and ornaments of gold is unlawful for the men of my Unmah but lawful for the women. Amr bin Aaas has related: Once two women came before the Prophet (peace be upon him), and they were wearing bracelets of gold. He said: Would you like that Allah should make you wear bracelets of the fire instead of these? They replied that they would not. Thereupon he said: Pay their dues, i.e. the zakat due on them.

Aisha has stated that there is no harm in wearing the ornaments if the zakat due on them is paid.

Umar wrote to Abu Musa Ashari: Order the Muslim women who live in the areas under your administrative control that they should pay the zakat dues on their ornaments.
Imam Abu Hanifah has related the following traditions on the authority of Amr bin Dinar: Aishah had arranged ornaments of gold for her sisters and Abdullah bin Umar for his daughters.

After citing all these traditions, Allama Jassas writes: The traditions that have been related from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the companions about the permissibility and lawfulness of gold and silk for the women are better known and more common than those that are there about their unlawfulness, and the above verse also points to their lawfulness. Then the practice of the Muslims also from the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions till our time (i.e. till the latter

part of the 4th century of hijrah) has been the same, and no one ever objected to it. In such matters, no objection can be admitted on the basis of the isolated reports (Akhbar ahab).

وَ جَعَلُوا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عِبٰدُ الرَّحْمٰنِ اِنٰثًا ؕ اَشَهِدُوْا خَلْقَهُمْ ؕ سَتُكْتَبُ شَهٰدَتُهُمْ وَ يُسْـَٔلُوْنَ ﴿۱۹﴾

(43-19) They claim that angels, who are Allah's chosen servants, (18) are females. Did they witness how their body is constituted? (19) Their testimony shall be written and they shall be called to account.

(18) That is, who are free from this that they should be males or females.

(19) Another translation can be: Were they present at the time of their creation?

وَقَالُوْا لَوْ شَآءَ الرَّحْمٰنُ مَا عَبَدْنٰهُمْ ؕ مَا لَهُمْ بِذٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۚ اِنْ هُمْ اِلَّا يَخْرُصُوْنَ ﴿۲۰﴾

(43-20) They say: “Had the Merciful One so willed, we would never have worshipped these deities.” (20) But they have no knowledge of the matter and are simply conjecturing.

(20) This was their reasoning from destiny to cover up their deviation and error, and this has been the argument of the wrongdoers in every age. They argued that their worshiping the angels became possible only because Allah allowed them to do so. Had He not willed so they could not have done it; and then it had been a practice with them for centuries and no torment from Allah had descended on them, which meant that Allah did not disapprove of their this practice.

اَمْ اٰتَيْنٰهُمْ كِتٰبًا مِّنْ قَبْلِهٖ فَهُمْ بِهٖ مُسْتَمْسِكُوْنَ ﴿۲۱﴾

(43-21) Or did We bestow upon them a Book before on whose authority they are holding on (to angel-worship)? (21)

(21) It means this: These ignorant people think that whatever is happening in the world has the approval of Allah for it, because it is happening according to His will. This argument, however, is wrong. For it is not only shirk which is being committed in the world, but countless other crimes like stealing, robbery, murder, bribery, etc. are also taking place, which nobody likes. Then, can it be said by the same reasoning that all such acts are lawful and good only because Allah is letting them happen in His world, and when He allows them to happen, He must have approved of them also? The means of knowing what Allah likes and what He hates are not the events that are happening in the world, but the Book of Allah, which comes through His Messenger and in which Allah Himself states as to what beliefs, what deeds and what morals He likes and what He dislikes. If these people have a Book, which came before the Quran, and which tells that Allah has appointed the angels also as deities beside himself and that they should worship them also, they should cite it. (For further explanation, see (Surah Al-Anam, Ayats 107-112, 137, 148-149); (Surah Al- Aaraf, Ayat 28); (Surah Younus, Ayat 99); (Surah Hud, Ayats 118-119); (Surah Ar-Rad, Ayat 31); (Surah An-Nahl, Ayats 9, 35-36, 93); and (E.N. 20 of Surah Az-Zumar) and (E.N. 11 of Surah Ash-Shura).

بَلْ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ اٰبَآءَنَا عَلٰٓى اُمَّةٍ وَّ اِنَّا عَلٰٓى اٰثٰرِهِمْ مُّهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

(43-22) Nay; they simply claim: “We found our forefathers on a way, and we continue to find guidance in their footsteps.” (22)

(22) That is, they have no authority of any divine book. The only authority they have is that it has been the practice since the time of their forefathers. Therefore, they have taken the angels as goddesses in imitation of them.

وَكَذٰلِكَ مَآ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِيْ قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيْرٍ اِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوْهَآ اِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ اٰبَآءَنَا عَلٰٓى اُمَّةٍ وَّ اِنَّا عَلٰٓى اٰثٰرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

(43-23) And thus it is: whenever We sent any warner to a city its affluent ones said: “We found our forefathers on a way and we continue to follow in their footsteps.” (23)

(23) Here, the point worth consideration is why only the well to do people of every community have resisted the Prophets and upheld the imitation of their forefathers in every age. Why have they alone been in the forefront to oppose the truth and to endeavor to maintain the established falsehood and to beguile and incite the common people against them? Its basic causes were two:

(1) The well to do and affluent people are so absorbed in making and enjoying the world of their own that they are not inclined to bother themselves about the useless debate (as they assume it to be) between the truth and falsehood. Their love of ease and mental lethargy renders them so heedless of religion and conservative that they want the established order, no matter whether it is based on truth or falsehood, to retrain in force so that they do not have to take the trouble of thinking about the new order at all for themselves.

(2) Their interests become so dependent on the established order that when they get the first glimpse of the order presented by the Prophets, they start feeling that if it came, it would not only put an end to their leadership but also would deprive them of the freedom to consume the lawful and commit the unlawful. (For further details, see Surah Al-Anaam, Ayat 103; (Surah Al-Araf, Ayats 66-70). 75, 88, 109, 127); (Surah Hud, Ayats 27-28); (Surah Bani-Israil, Ayat 16); (Surah Al-Muminun, Ayats 24-33, 46); (Surah Saba, Ayat 34) and the corresponding E.Ns).

قٰلَ اَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِاَهْدٰى مِمَّا وَجَدْتُّمْ عَلَيْهِ اٰبَآءَكُمْ ؕ قَالُوْۤا اِنَّا بِمَاۤ اُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهٖ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

(43-24) Each Prophet asked them: “Will you do so even if we were to show you a way better than the way of your forefathers?” They answered: “We disbelieve in the religion with which you have been sent.”

فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

(43-25) Then We exacted retribution from them. So do consider the end of those who gave the lie (to the Prophets).

وَ اِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ لِاَبِيْهِ وَقَوْمِهٖٓ اِنَّنِيْ بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُوْنَ ۙ﴿۲۶﴾

(43-26) Call to mind when Abraham said to his father and his people:[24] “I totally disown all whom you serve

24. For details, see (Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayats 124-133); (Surah Al-Anam, Ayats 74-84); (Surah Ibrahim, Ayats 35- 41); (Surah Maryam, Ayats 41-50); (Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayats 51-73); (Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 69-89), (Surah Al-Ankabut, Ayats 16-27); (Surah As-Safat, Ayats 83-100) and the corresponding E.Ns.

اِلَّا الَّذِيْ فَطَرَنِيْ فَاِنَّهٗ سَيَهْدِيْنِ ﴿۲۷﴾

(43-27) except the One Who created me; and, behold, it is He Who will direct me to the Right Way.” (25)

(25) In these words not only did the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) state his creed but also gave the argument for it. The reason for not having any connection with the other deities is that they neither have created nor they give right guidance in any matter, nor they can; and the reason for having a connection only with Allah Almighty is that He alone is the Creator and He alone gives, and can give the right guidance to mankind.

وَ جَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةًۢ بَاقِيَةً فِيْ عَقِبِهٖ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿۲۸﴾

(43-28) And Abraham left behind this word (26) to endure among his posterity so that they may return to it. (27)

(26) A word: the word that none but the Creator is worthy of worship in the world.

(27) That is, whenever they swerve from the right path, this word should be there to guide them so that they return to it again. This event has been mentioned here in order to expose the foolishness of the disbelieving Quraish and to put them to shame, as if to say: When you have adopted obedience of your ancestors, you have selected the most depraved of them for the purpose

instead of the most righteous and illustrious, who were the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them). The basis of the leadership of the Quraish in Arabia was that they were the descendants of the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them) and were the attendants of the Kabah built by them. Therefore, they should have followed them and not their ignorant forefathers who had given up the way of the Prophets and adopted polytheism from the neighboring idol-worshipers. Furthermore, by mentioning this event another error of those people has been pointed out. That is, if the blind imitation of the forefathers, without the distinction of good and evil had been the right thing, the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) should have done so in the first instance. But he had plainly told his father and his people that he could not follow their creed of ignorance in which they had abandoned the Creator and made those imaginary beings their deities, who were not the creator. This shows that the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) did not believe in following the forefathers, but his creed was that before one followed the forefathers one should see whether they were following the right way or not, and if it became known by reason that they were following the wrong way, one should give up their way and adopt the way that was proved right.

بَلۡ مَتَّعۡتُ ۡؤُلَآءِ وَ اٰبَآءَهُمۡ حَتّٰی جَآءَهُمُ الۡحَقُّ وَ رَسُوۡلٌ مُّبِیۡنٌ ﴿۲۹﴾

(43-29) (Even when they began worshipping others than Allah We did not destroy them) but bestowed sustenance on them and on their forefathers until there came to them the Truth and a Messenger who clearly expounded things to them. (28)

(28) Another meaning of the word rasulum-mubin can be: A Messenger whose being a Messenger was obvious and apparent: Whose life before and after the Prophethood clearly testified that he was certainly Allah’s Messenger.

وَ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ الۡحَقُّ قَالُوۡا ہٰذَا سِحۡرٌ وَّ اِنَّا بِہٖ کٰفِرُوۡنَ ﴿۳۰﴾

(43-30) And when the Truth came to them they said: “This is just sorcery (29) and we reject it.”

(29) For explanation, see (Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayat 3 and E.N. 5) on it, and (E.N. 5 of Surah Suad).

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنُ عَلٰى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

(43-31) They say: “Why was this Qur'an not sent down upon some great man from the two (main) cities?” (30)

(30) The two towns: Makkah and Taif. What the disbelievers meant was: Had Allah really willed to send a messenger and intended to send down a book to him, He would have selected a great man from our these central cities for the purpose. For Allah could not have selected for this great mission a person who was born an orphan, who did not inherit much property, who passed his youth by tending goats, who even at present earned his living through business with his wife’s money, and who was neither the chief of a tribe nor the head of a family. Were not there well known chiefs like Walid bin Mughirah and Utbah bin Rabiah in Makkah, and nobles like Urwah bin Masud, Habib bin Amr, Kinanah bin Abdi Amr and Ibn Abd Yalil in Taif? This was their reasoning in the first instance, they were also not inclined to believe that a man could be a Messenger. But when the Quran refuted this misconception by argument and reason and they were told that in the past only men had come as Messengers and a man only could be a Messenger for the guidance of the people, and not another kind of being and the Messenger who came did not descend suddenly from heavens but were born in the same ordinary dwellings, walked about in the streets, had children and families and stood in need of food and drink (see (Surah An-Nahl, Ayat 43); (Surah Bani Israil, Ayats 94-95); (Surah Yousuf, Ayat 109); (Surah Al-Furqan, Ayats 7, 20); (Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayats 7-8); (Surah Ar-Raad, Ayat 38), they took this stand, saying: Well, even if a human being, he should be a big man, who should be wealthy, influential and awe-inspiring and having a large following. How could Muhammad bin Abdullah (peace be upon him) be fit for this appointment?

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُوْنَ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّكَ ؕ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَّعِيْشَتَهُمْ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَ رَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجٰتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا ؕ وَ رَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(43-32) Is it they who distribute the Mercy of your Lord? It is We Who have distributed their livelihood among them in the life of this world, and have raised some above others in rank that some of them may harness others to their service. (31) Your Lord's Mercy is better than all the treasures that they hoard. (32)

(31) This is the answer to their objection, which briefly mentions many important things:

First, it asks: Since when do these people become responsible for distributing the mercy of your Lord? Is it for them to decide whom Allah should favor with His mercy and whom He should not? (Here, by Allah's mercy is implied His general mercy from which everyone has a share).

Second, Allah says: Prophethood is a great blessing. We have even kept the distribution of the common means of life in the world in Our own hand, and have not entrusted it to anyone else. We create someone beautiful and another ugly, someone with a sweet voice and another with a harsh voice, someone robust and strong and another weak and frail, someone intelligent and another dull, someone with a strong memory and another forgetful, some with healthy limbs and another a cripple, or blind or deaf and dumb, someone in a rich family and another among the poor, someone in an advanced country and another in a backward community. No one can do anything about this destiny concerning birth. One is compelled to be what We have made him. And it is in no one's power to avert the impact his circumstances of birth have on his destiny. Then it is We our self Who are distributing provisions, power, honor, fame, wealth, government, etc. among men. No one can degrade the one whom We have blessed with good fortune, and no one can save from ruin the one whom We have afflicted with misfortune. All plans and schemes of man become ineffective against Our decrees. In this universal divine system, therefore, how can these people decide as to whom should the Master of the universe make His Prophet and whom He should not?

Thirdly, an abiding principle that We have kept in view in this divine system is that everything should not be given to one and the same person, or everything should not be given to everybody. If you look around carefully, you will see that great differences exist between the people in every respect. We have given one thing to one person but deprived him of another, and given the same to another one. This is based on the wisdom that no human being should become independent of others, but everyone should remain dependent on the other in one way or the other. Now if would be foolish on your part to think that We should have given the Prophethood also to the same person whom We had blessed with wealth and nobility. Likewise, will you also say that wisdom, knowledge, wealth, beauty, power, authority and all other excellences should be assembled in one and the same person, and the one who has not been given one thing, should not be given anything else?

(32) Your Lord’s mercy: the Prophethood. It means: Your leaders and chiefs whom you regard as big people because of their wealth and dignity and chiefship, are not worthy of this wealth, which has been given to Muhammad bin Abdullah (peace be upon him). This wealth is far superior to that and for this the criterion is different. If you think that every noble and rich man is worthy of becoming a prophet, it would only show your own thinking. Why do you expect Allah to be so ignorant and simple?

وَ لَوْلَاۤ اَنۡ یَّکُوۡنَ النَّاسُ اُمَّۃً وَّاحِدَۃً لَّجَعَلۡنَا لِمَنۡ یَّکۡفُرُ بِالرَّحۡمٰنِ لِبُیُوۡتِہِمۡ سُقُفًا مِّنۡ فِضَّۃٍ وَّ مَعَارِجَ عَلَیۡہَا یَظۡہَرُوۡنَ ﴿۳۳﴾

(43-33) Were it not that all mankind would become a single community (and follow the same way), We would have provided for all those who disbelieve in the Merciful One silver roofs for their houses, and (silver) stairs on which to go up,

وَ لِبُیُوۡتِہِمۡ اَبۡوَابًا وَّ سُرُرًا عَلَیۡہَا یَتَّکِـُٔوۡنَ ﴿۳۴﴾

(43-34) and (silver) doors to their houses, and couches (of silver) upon which they would recline; (33)

(33) That is, this silver and gold whose possession by somebody is the highest blessing and the very climax of good fortune in your sight, is so base and contemptible a thing in the sight of Allah that had there been no danger of all human beings being inclined towards unbelief, He would have made every disbeliever's house of gold and silver. Since when has the abundance of this worthless commodity become proof of man’s nobility and his piety and his spiritual purity? This kind of wealth is even found in the possession of those foul and wicked people whose filthy characters make the whole society stink. And this you have made the criterion of man’s greatness of character.

وَ زُخْرُفًا ؕ وَاِنْ كُلُّ ذٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتٰعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ؕ وَالْاٰخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۳۵ؕ

(43-35) or that they be made of gold. Surely all this is only the enjoyment of the life of the world. But (true prosperity) in the Hereafter with Your Lord is only for the God-fearing.

وَمَنْ يَّعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهٗ شَيْطٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهٗ قَرِيْنٌ ۳۶ؕ

(43-36) He who is negligent to remember the Merciful One, (34) to him We assign a satan as his boon companion,

(34) Dhikrir Rahman: His remembrance as well as His admonition and the Quran.

وَ اِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّوْنَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيْلِ وَ يَحْسَبُوْنَ اَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُوْنَ ۳۷ؕ

(43-37) and these satans hinder them from the Right Path, while he still reckons himself to be rightly-guided.

حَتّٰۤى اِذَا جَآءَنَا قَالَ يٰلَيْتَ بَيْنِيْ وَ بَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ الْقَرِيْنُ ۳۸ؕ

(43-38) But when he comes to Us, he will say (to his satan): “Would that there had been between me and you the distance as between the East and the West. How evil a companion you were!”

وَلَ ن۬نَّ فَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ اِ ظَّلَمْتُمْ اَنَّكُمْ فِى الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ۝٣٩

(43-39) (He will then be told): “Today it will not benefit you the least that after your wrong-doing you and your satans now share the chastisement.” (35)

(35) That is, in this there is no aspect of consolation for you that the one who misguided you is being punished, for you are also receiving the same punishment for accepting and following the deviation.

اَفَاَنۡتَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ اَوْ تَ ۡدِى الْعُمْىَ وَمَ كَانَ فِ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝٤٠

(43-40) Can you, (O Prophet), then make the deaf hear, or direct to the Right Way the blind or one lost in manifest error?[36]

(36) It means to say: Pay attention to those who are inclined to listen and have not closed their eyes to the realities, and do not consume yourself in showing the way to the blind and making the deaf to hear, nor consume yourself with the grief as to why your near and dear ones are not coming to the right path, and why they are making themselves worthy of Allah’s torment.

فَاِمَّا نَذْ بَنَّ بِكَ فَاِنَّا مِنْ هُمْ مُّنْتَقِمُونَ ۝٤١

(40-41) Now We have to punish them, whether We take you away from the world,

اَوْ نُرِيَنَّكَ الَّذِ وَعَدْنٰهُمْ فَاِنَّا عَلَ ۡهِمْ مُّقْتَدِرُونَ ۝٤٢

(40-42) or let you see their end, which We have promised them: We have full power over them (37)

(37) This thing can be understood fully only by keeping in view the background in which it was said. The disbelievers of Makkah thought that the person of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had become a source of trouble for them. If they could

somehow get rid of him, matters would become normal. On the basis of this evil thought they were holding consultations day and night and planning to kill him. At this, Allah addresses His Prophet (peace be upon him) so as to tell them indirectly: It doesn't make any difference whether you remain among them or not. If you live, you will see them meet their doom with your own eyes. If you are recalled from the world, they will be sent to their doom in your absence, because they cannot in any case escape the consequences of their misdeeds.

فَاسْتَمْسِكْ بِالَّذِيْٓ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ ۚ اِنَّكَ عَلٰي صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ۝۴۳

(43-43) So hold fast to what has been revealed to you. Surely you are on the Straight Way. (38)

(38) That is, you should not worry as to what punishment do those who are resisting and opposing the truth with injustice and dishonesty receive and when. Nor should you worry whether Islam flourishes during your lifetime or not. For you this satisfaction is quite enough that you are on the right path. Therefore, you should go on fulfilling your mission unconcerned about the results, and leave it to Allah whether He defeats falsehood in front of you or after you.

وَاِنَّهٗ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ ۚ وَسَوْفَ تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ ۝۴۴

(43-44) Verily it is a great source of eminence for you and your people, and soon you will be called to account concerning that. (39)

(39) That is, there can be no greater good fortune for a person than that Allah should choose him from among all men to become the recipient of His Book, and there can be no greater good fortune also for a nation than that Allah should raise His Prophet in it, apart from all other nations of the world, and should send down His Book in its tongue, and give it the opportunity to rise as the standard-bearer of divine message in the world. If the Quraish and the people of Arabia have no sense of this great honor, and

spurn it, a time will come when they will be called upon to account for it.

وَسْـَٔلْ مَنْ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُّسُلِنَآ اَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ دُوْنِ الرَّحْمٰنِ اٰلِهَةً يُّعْبَدُوْنَ ﴿۴۵﴾

(43-45) Ask all Our Messengers whom We sent before you whether We had appointed any deities beside the Merciful One to be worshipped. (40)

(40) Ask the Messengers: Find out from the Books brought by them. Just as the meaning of: “If there arises any dispute among you about anything, refer it to Allah and His Prophet,” is not that the dispute should be taken before Allah and His Messenger, but that one should turn to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger for a decision, so “asking the Messengers” also does not mean that one should approach all the Messengers who have left the world and ask them, but the right meaning is: Discover what teachings the Messengers of Allah have left in the world as to which of them taught that another than Allah also is worthy of worship and service.

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا مُوْسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَآ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَ مَلَا۟ئِهٖ فَقَالَ اِنِّىْ رَسُوْلُ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۴۶﴾

(43-46) Indeed We (41) sent Moses with Our Signs (42) to Pharaoh and his nobles. He told them: “I am a Messenger of the Lord of the Universe.”

(41) This story has been narrated here for three objects:

(1) That when Allah sends His Prophet to a country and nation and affords it the opportunity which He has now given to the Arabs by appointing the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to Prophethood, and it, instead of taking advantage of this, commits the folly of Pharaoh and his people, it meets the same fate which has become an object lesson in history.

(2) That just as Pharaoh also on account of his arrogance and pride of kingdom and grandeur and wealth and

possessions had belittled the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) as mean and contemptible, so the unbelieving Quraish are now regarding Muhammad (peace be upon him) as insignificant as against their chiefs. But God's judgment was different which ultimately proved who was really great.

(3) That to mock Allah's revelations and show stubbornness against His warnings is not a mere joke, but a very serious sin. If you do not learn a lesson from the fate of those who have been doomed on account of this, you also would go to your doom on account of the same.

(42) This implies the signs with which the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had gone to the court of Pharaoh, i.e. the signs of the staff and the shining hand. (For explanation, see (Surah Al-Araf, Ayats 107-108); (Surah Ta Ha, Ayats 20-22); (Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 32-33); (Surah An-Naml; Ayats 10-12), (Surah Al-Qasas; Ayats 31-32).

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِاٰيٰتِنَاۤ اِذَا هُمْ مِّنْهَا يَضْحَكُوْنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

(43-47) Yet when he brought forth Clear Signs from Us, then lo, they burst into laughter.

وَمَا نُرِيْهِمْ مِّنْ اٰيَةٍ اِلَّا هِيَ اَكْبَرُ مِنْ اُخْتِهَا وَ اَخَذْنٰهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿۴۸﴾

(43-48) Every Sign that We showed them was greater than its predecessor; and then We seized them with Our chastisement so that they may return (to the Right Way). (43)

(43) This implies the signs which Allah showed them through the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) afterwards, and these were the following:

(1) A public encounter of Allah's Prophet with the magicians, who believed after their defeat. For details, see (Surah Al-Araf, Ayats 112-126); (Surah Ta Ha, Ayats 68-73); (Surah Ash-Shuara, Ayats 37-51).

(2) A severe famine which hit the land of Egypt according to Prophet Moses' (peace be upon him) announcement and which left the country only by his prayer.

(3) Dreadful rain and hail-storms accompanied by lightning and thunder struck the country even as Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had announced, which destroyed the crops and dwellings and which also was removed only by his prayer.

(4) The sudden appearance of locusts in the land. This calamity was also not removed when Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) prayed to Allah.

(5) Lice and weevils spread throughout the country according to the announcement made by Moses (peace be upon him), which afflicted men and animals on the one hand, and destroyed granaries on the other. This torment was also averted when Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was requested to pray for its removal.

(6) Frogs appeared everywhere in the country according to the warning given by Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), which put the whole population to great distress. This calamity did not also retreat until Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) prayed for it.

(7) The torment of blood appeared precisely as foretold by Moses (peace be upon him), which turned the water of all canals, wells, springs, pools and cisterns into blood. The fish died and the water smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink from it for a full week. This evil was also averted when the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was asked to pray for its removal. For details, see (Surah Al- Aaraf, Ayats 130-136). (Surah An-Naml, Ayat 12) and (E.N. 37 of Surah Al-Mumin).

Chapters 7 to 10 of Exodus also contain the details of these calamities, but it is a combination of gossip and truth. It says that when the calamity of blood appeared, the magicians also worked a similar miracle, but when the calamity of the lice came, the magicians could not produce lice in response, and they said that it was God’s work. Even more strange than this is that when the storm of the frogs came, the magicians also brought about frogs, but in spite of that Pharaoh requested only the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) to pray to God to take away the frogs. The question is when the magicians could produce frogs, why didn’t Pharaoh get the frogs taken away through them? And how did it become known which of the frogs were Allah’s work and which of the magicians’ work? The same

question arises about the blood. When according to the warning of Moses (peace be upon him) water became blood everywhere, which water did the magicians turn into blood? And how was it known that the water of a particular place had turned blood by the power of the magicians? Such are the things which show that the Bible does not consist of purely divine revelation, but the people who wrote it mixed up many things in it from their own imagination. The pity, however, is that the authors also were people of ordinary intelligence, who did not even know how to invent a story.

وَقَالُوۡا يٰۤاَيُّهَ السَّاحِرُ ادۡعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنۡدَكَ اِنَّنَا لَمُهۡتَدُوۡنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

(43-49) (Whenever they faced an affliction) they would say: “O magician, pray for us to your Lord according to your station with Him. We shall certainly be guided to the Right Way.”

فَلَمَّا كَشَفۡنَا عَنۡهُمُ الۡعَذَابَ اِذَا هُمۡ يَنۡكُثُوۡنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

(43-50) But lo, each time We removed Our affliction from them, they would go back on their word. (44)

(44) The stubbornness of Pharaoh and the chiefs of his people can be judged from the fact that when distressed by the torment they wanted the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) to pray for its removal, even then they did not recognize him as a Prophet but addressed him as a magician, whereas they were not unaware of the truth about magic, and they also knew that those miraculous things could not be brought about by the power of magic. The most that a magician can do is that in a limited area he can so influence the people present in front of him as to make them feel that water has become blood, or frogs are coming out in large numbers or swarms of locusts are advancing. And within this limited place also no water will actually become blood, but water will remain water as soon as it comes outside it; no frog will be produced in actual fact, but will prove to be an imaginary thing as soon as brought outside the circle; locusts also would be imaginary: they would not be able to destroy any crop. As for this

that a famine appears throughout a country, or that the canals and springs and wells of the country are filled with blood, or that swarms of locusts spread over thousands of square miles and eat up crops growing over thousands of acres, this has neither been accomplished by a magician so far, nor can it ever happen by the power of magic. Should such magicians be there in the service of a king, he need not keep forces and fight wars; he could conquer the whole world by the power of magic. Even if the magicians possessed such power, they would not seek service under the kings, but would assume kingship themselves.

The commentators in general have been perplexed as to why Pharaoh and his courtiers addressed the Prophet Moses as “O sorcerer”, when they requested him to pray for the removal of the calamity, for the one who seeks another’s help in a hard time flatters him and does not condemn him. They have given the interpretation that sorcery in the Egypt of those days was held as a very respectable art, and when they addressed Moses as “O sorcerer” they did not condemn him, but honored him because it amounted to calling him as “O Learned man” But this interpretation is absolutely wrong on the ground that wherever at other places in the Quran Pharaoh’s sayings have been cited in which he had called the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) a sorcerer and the miracles presented by him sorcery, the sense of condemnation and contempt becomes apparent, and it becomes manifestly clear that sorcery was false in his sight, which he imputed to the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) so as to prove his claim to the Prophethood to be false! Therefore, it cannot be acceptable that suddenly at this time “sorcerer” became the title of an honorable and learned man in his sight. As for the question: Why did the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) accede to his request at all when even while requesting him for the prayer, Pharaoh insulted him publicly, the answer is that the object before the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was to strengthen the case against those people by Allah’s command. Their request to him to pray for the removal of the torment by itself proved that in their hearts they had come to know why the torments were occurring, who was sending them and who could avert them. In spite of that, when they called him a “sorcerer” stubbornly, and

went back on their word of following the right way as soon as the torment was averted, they in fact, did not do any harm to Allah's Prophet, but only caused the case and argument to be strengthened against themselves, which Allah at last decided against them with their total destruction. When they called him a sorcerer, this did not mean that they believed in their hearts as well that the torments against them were coming by the power of sorcery, but they realized it fully that those were Allah's signs and yet they denied them deliberately. The same thing has been said in (Surah An-Naml, Ayat 14): They rejected those signs out of sheer injustice and vanity, whereas in their hearts they were convinced.

وَ نَادٰی فِرْعَوْنُ فِیْ قَوْمِهٖ قَالَ یٰقَوْمِ اَلَیْسَ لِیْ مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَ هٰذِهِ الْاَنْهٰرُ تَجْرِیْ مِنْ تَحْتِیْ ۚ اَفَلَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ۟ۙ۵۱

(43-51) And Pharaoh proclaimed among his people: (45) "My people, do I not have dominion over Egypt, and are these streams not flowing beneath me? Can't you see? (46)

(45) Pharaoh probably sent heralds to the cities and towns throughout the country to proclaim what he said in his address to his ministers and courtiers in the capital. Pharaoh could not have availed of the services of a sycophantic press, controlled news agencies and official radio.

(46) The words of the proclamation clearly show that ground was slipping from under the Pharaoh's feet. The miracles performed one after the other by the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had caused the common people's beliefs in their gods to waver and the Pharaoh's spell under which their dynasty was ruling over Egypt as representatives of the gods, was shattered. Thereupon, Pharaoh cried out: O wretched people, can't you see who is ruling over this land and under whose control are the canals which have been dug out from the Nile, upon which depends your whole economy? All these developments in this country have been brought about by me and my predecessors, but you are being devoted, charmed and fascinated by this pauper!

اَمْ اَنَا خَ ۡيۡرٌ مِّنۡ ۙ هٰذَا الَّذِىۡ ۙ هُوَ مَ ۡهِيۡنٌ ۙ وَّلَا يَكَادُ يُبِ ۡنُ ۙ ﴿۵۲﴾

(43-52) Am I better or this contemptible man [47] who is scarcely able to express himself? [48]

(47) Who is despicable: the person who has neither wealth, nor power, nor authority. This same objection had been raised by the disbelieving Quraish against the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

(48) Some commentators have expressed the opinion that Pharaoh referred to the impediment of speech from which the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) suffered since childhood. But this is not a correct opinion. As has been mentioned in Surah Ta Ha above, when the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was being appointed to Prophethood, he had implored Allah Almighty to remove the defect from his tongue so that the people might understand his speech and at that very time his request had also been granted along with his other requests (Verse 27-36). Moreover, orations of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) that have been cited at different places in the Quran, point to his perfect eloquence and fluency. Therefore, the basis of Pharaoh's objection was not any impediment of speech from which Moses (peace be upon him) might be suffering but what he meant was: This person talks confusedly, at least I have never been able to understand what he says.

فَلَوْلَا ۙ اُلۡقِىَ عَلَ ۡيهِ اَسۡوِرَةٌ مِّنۡ ذَهَبٍ اَوۡ جَآءَ مَعَهُ الۡمَلٰٓئِكَةُ مُقۡتَرِنِيۡنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

(43-53) Why were bracelets of gold not bestowed upon him? Why did a retinue of angels not accompany him as attendants?" [49]

(49) In the ancient times when a person was appointed to be governor of a land or sent as an ambassador to a foreign country, a robe of honor was conferred on him by the king, which also included bracelets of gold, and he was also accompanied by a contingent of soldiers and servants for over-awing the people and

for showing the glory and grandeur of the king who had appointed him. What Pharaoh meant to say was: If the King of the heavens had really sent Moses (peace be upon him) as His ambassador to His counterpart on the earth, he should have been dressed in a robe of honor and come with several contingents of angels in attendance. How strange that a poor man should appear with a staff in his hand and say that he was the messenger of the Lord of the worlds!

فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهٗ فَاَطَاعُوْهُ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا قَوْمًا فٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾

(43-54) He incited his people to levity and they obeyed him. Surely they were an iniquitous people. (50)

(50) A tremendous reality has been expressed in this brief sentence. When a person wishes to become autocratic in a country and contrives every plan openly to achieve his object, he practices every deception and trick. He buys and sells consciences and persecutes and crushes ruthlessly those who cannot be purchased. He, in fact, shows by his actions, whatever he may say to the contrary, that he takes the people of the country to be light as regards to their intellect, morals and manliness, and has formed the impression that he can drive the foolish, unscrupulous and cowardly people wherever he likes. Then, when he has succeeded in his designs and the people have become his obedient servants, they prove by their conduct and behavior that they are actually what the wicked man had taken them to be, and the main cause of their depravity is that they are basically a sinful people. They are not in the least concerned as to what is the truth and what is falsehood, what is justice and what is injustice, whether the noble traits of character are truthfulness and honesty or falsehood and dishonesty and meanness. Instead of this, only their personal interests are of real importance to them, for the sake of which they remain ever ready to cooperate with every wicked person, to yield to every tyrant, to accept every falsehood and to suppress every protest that is voiced in favor of the truth.

فَلَمَّآ اٰسَفُوْنَا انْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَاَغْرَقْنٰهُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾

(43-55) So when they incurred Our wrath, We exacted retribution from them, and drowned them all,

فَجَعَلْنٰهُمْ سَلَفًا وَّ مَثَلًا لِّلْاٰخِرِيْنَ ﴿۵۶﴾

(43-56) and made them a thing of the past and an example for those who would come after them. (51)

(51) That is, they are a precedent for those who do not learn any lesson from their example, and an object lesson for those who are keen to learn a lesson.

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا اِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّوْنَ ﴿۵۷﴾

(43-57) No sooner the example of the son of Mary was mentioned than, lo and behold, your people raised a clamor

وَ قَالُوْٓا ءَاٰلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ اَمْ هُوَ ؕ مَا ضَرَبُوْهُ لَكَ اِلَّا جَدَلًا ؕ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُوْنَ ﴿۵۸﴾

(43-58) and said: “Who is better, our deities or he?” (52) They said so only out of contentiousness. They are a disputatious people.

(52) In (Verse 45) above, it was said: You may ask all other Messengers whom We sent before you whether We had appointed any other gods to be worshiped beside the Merciful God. When this discourse was being presented before the people of Makkah, a person called Abdullah ibn az-Zibara in the traditions, put forward the objection: Well, is it not a fact that the Christians regard the son of Mary as the son of God and worship him? What is then wrong with our gods? This caused much laughter among the crowd of the disbelievers and they started clamoring for an answer to this objection. But at this foolish behavior, the continuity of the revelation was not broken, but was first completed and then the objection of the questioner was taken up. (It should be borne in mind that this incident has been reported in the books of commentaries in different ways which contain great variations, but after a study of the context and the traditions the

real incident in our view is the same as we have mentioned above).

اِنۡ هُوَ اِلَّا عَبۡدٌ اَنۡعَمۡنَا عَلَيۡهِ وَ جَعَلۡنٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِىۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِيۡلَ ۚ ﴿۵۹﴾

(43-59) He was no more than a servant (of Ours), one upon whom We bestowed Our favors and whom We made an example (of Our infinite power) for the Children of Israel. (53)

(53) “We made him an example” implies causing the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) to be born without a father, and then granting him such miracles as had not been granted to anyone before him nor to anyone after him. He would make a bird of clay and then breathe into it and it would become a living bird; he would give sight to those born blind; he would cure the lepers; so much so that he would raise the dead back to life. What Allah means to say is: It is wrong to worship him as son of God and regard him as above servitude only because of his extraordinary birth and the great miracles granted to him. He was no more than a mere servant, whom We had blessed and made an example of Our power. (For details, see (Surah Ale-Imran, Ayats 42-49, 59); (Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 156); (Surah Al- Maidah, Ayats 17,110); (Surah Maryam, Ayats 17-35); (Surah Al-Anbiya, Ayat 91); (Surah Al-Muminun, Ayat 50).

وَلَوۡ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلۡنَا مِنۡكُمۡ مَّلٰٓئِكَةً فِى الۡاَرۡضِ يَخۡلُفُوۡنَ ﴿۶۰﴾

(43-60) If We had so willed We could have made some of you into angels (54) to become your successors on earth.

(54) Another translation can be: make some of you angels.

وَ اِنَّهٗ لَعِلۡمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمۡتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُوۡنِ ؕ هٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسۡتَقِيۡمٌ ﴿۶۱﴾

(43-61) Verily he [i.e., Jesus) is a portent of the Hour. (55) So be in no doubt concerning it and follow Me. This is the Straight Way.

(55) Another translation of this sentence can be: He is a means of the knowledge of Resurrection. Here the question arises: What

is implied by “he”? According to Hasan Basri and Saeed bin Jubair it implies the Quran. That is, one can learn from the Quran that Resurrection will come. But this commentary is irrelevant to the context. There is nothing in the context on the basis of which it may be said that it refers to the Quran. Other commentators almost unanimously have expressed the opinion that it implies the prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), and this is suitable to the context. Now the question is: In what sense has Jesus Christ been called a sign or a means of the knowledge of Resurrection? Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Ikrimah, Qatadah, Suddi, Dahhak, Abul Aliyah and Abu Malik say that this refers to the second coming of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) as has been foretold in a large number of the traditions, and the verse means that when he comes the second time to the world, it will become known that Resurrection is not far behind. But in spite of the great authority that these scholars hold it is difficult to believe that in this verse the second advent of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) has been called a sign of Resurrection, or a means of its knowledge. For it is contradicted by the next verse. His second advent, indeed, can be a means of the knowledge of Resurrection only for those people who will be living in that future period or will be born after that. How could he be regarded as a means of the knowledge for the pagans of Makkah, who are being asked not to have any doubt about it? Therefore, the correct interpretation in our opinion is the one that has been given by some other commentators, according to which the Prophet Jesus’ (peace be upon him) birth without a father and his making a bird out of clay and his raising the dead back to life has been presented as a proof of the possibility of Resurrection. So, the divine words would mean: Why do you think it is impossible for God to raise you and all mankind from death when He can create a child without a father and a servant of His can breathe life into an image of clay and raise the dead back to life by His permission?

وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ الشَّيۡطٰنُ ۚ اِنَّهٗ لَكُمۡ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيۡنٌ ۝٦٢

(43-62) Let not Satan hinder you (from believing in the Hour), (56) for surely he is your open enemy.

(56) Hinder you: hinder you from believing in Resurrection.

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ عِيسٰى بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَ لِاُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِيْ تَخْتَلِفُوْنَ فِيْهِ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيْعُوْنِ ﴿۶۳﴾

(43-63) When Jesus came with Clear Signs and said: "I have brought wisdom to you that I may make plain to you some of the things you differ about. So fear Allah and follow me.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ رَبِّيْ وَ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوْهُ ؕ هٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِيْمٌ ﴿۶۴﴾

(43-64) Allah is my Lord and your Lord; therefore, serve Him. That is the Straight Way." (57)

(57) That is, the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) himself had never claimed that he was God or son of God, and that the people should worship him, but, on the contrary, his message was the same as of all other Prophets, the same as was now being conveyed to you through Muhammad (peace be upon him). (For explanation, see (Surah Aal-Imran, Ayats 50-51); (Surah An-Nisa, Ayats 171-172); (Surah Al- Maidah, Ayats 72, 116-117); (Surah Maryam, Ayats 30-36).

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْاَحْزَابُ مِنْۢ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ اَلِيْمٍ ﴿۶۵﴾

(43-65) Then the factions fell apart among themselves.[58] So woe to the wrong-doers from the chastisement of a grievous Day.

(58) That is, one group of the people denied him and in their antagonism went to the extent of accusing him of illegitimate birth and got him crucified as they thought. The other group believed in him but owing to exaggerated reverence made him son of God, and then the question of man's being God became such a riddle for it that every effort to resolve it caused it to be divided into countless sects. (For explanation, see (Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 171), (Surah Al-Maidah, Ayats 17,77, 116-117)and the corresponding E.Ns).

هَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّا السَّاعَةَ اَنْ تَاْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَّ هُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿۶۶﴾

(43-66) Are they awaiting anything other than the Last Hour that it should suddenly come upon them without their even perceiving it?

اَلْاَخِلَّآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ اِلَّا الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

(43-67) On that Day even bosom friends shall become enemies to one another, all except the God-fearing. (59)

(59) In other words, only those friendships will remain unaffected which are based on righteousness and piety in the world. All other friendships will turn into enmities, and those who are cooperating with one another in deviation, tyranny and wickedness today, will on the Day of Resurrection, put the blame on others and try to escape. This subject has been treated repeatedly at many places in the Quran so that every person in this very world may fully realize with whom it would be beneficial for him to cooperate and with whom it is harmful.

يٰعِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَآ اَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

(43-68) (It will be said to them): “My servants, today you have nothing to fear or regret,

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَكَانُوْا مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾

(43-69) you who believed in Our Signs and had surrendered yourselves (to Us)!

اُدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ اَنْتُمْ وَاَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾

(43-70) Enter Paradise joyfully, both you and your spouses.” (60)

(60) The word azwaj as used in the original can be used both for the wives and for those people who are a person’s close associates, friends and peers. This comprehensive word has been used so as to cover both the meanings. The believers will be

accompanied both by their believing wives and by their believing friends in Paradise.

يُطَافُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ بِصِحَافٍ مِّنۡ ذَهَبٍ وَّ اَكۡوَابٍ ؕ وَ فِيۡهَا مَا تَشۡتَهِيۡهِ الۡاَنۡفُسُ وَ تَلَذُّ الۡاَعۡيُنُ ۚ وَ اَنۡتُمۡ فِيۡهَا خٰلِدُوۡنَ ۚ﴿۷۱﴾

(43-71) Platters and cups of gold shall be passed around them, and there shall be all that they might desire and all that their eyes might delight in. (They shall be told): “Herein shall you abide forever.

وَ تِلۡكَ الۡجَنَّةُ الَّتِىۡۤ اُوۡرِثۡتُمُوۡهَا بِمَا كُنۡتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ﴿۷۲﴾

(43-72) Such is the Paradise that you shall inherit by virtue of your good deeds in the life of the world.

لَـكُمۡ فِيۡهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيۡرَةٌ مِّنۡهَا تَاۡكُلُوۡنَ ﴿۷۳﴾

(43-73) Herein you will have abundant fruits of which you will eat.”

اِنَّ الۡمُجۡرِمِيۡنَ فِىۡ عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدُوۡنَ ۚ﴿۷۴﴾

(43-74) But the evil-doers shall abide in the torment of Hell.

لَا يُفَتَّرُ عَنۡهُمۡ وَهُمۡ فِيۡهِ مُبۡلِسُوۡنَ ﴿۷۵﴾

(43-75) Never will their torment be lightened for them. They shall remain in utter despair.

وَ مَا ظَلَمۡنٰهُمۡ وَلٰكِنۡ كَانُوۡا هُمُ الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ﴿۷۶﴾

(43-76) It is not We Who wronged them; rather, it is they who wronged themselves.

وَ نَادَوۡا يٰمٰلِكُ لِيَقۡضِ عَلَيۡنَا رَبُّكَ ؕ قَالَ اِنَّكُمۡ مّٰكِثُوۡنَ ﴿۷۷﴾

(43-77) They shall call out: “O Malik, [61] let your Lord put an end to us.” He will reply: “You must stay on in it.

(61) Malik: a keeper of Hell as is evident from the context.

لَقَدْ جِئْنٰكُم بِالْحَقِّ وَ لٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كٰرِهُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

(43-78) We brought you the Truth; but to the truth most of you were averse.” [62]

(62) That is, We made the reality plain to you, but you were fond of the imaginary, and you had an aversion to the truth. Now, why do you lament at the fate of your foolish choice? It may be a part of the Hell-keeper’s answer, and it may also be that his answer ended with: Here you must remain, and this second sentence as an addition by Allah. In the first case, the keeper’s saying: We had brought the Truth to you, is just like an official’s using the word “we” on behalf of his government, when he wants to say: Our government did this or gave such and such an order.

اَمْ اَبْرَمُوْٓا اَمْرًا فَاِنَّا مُبْرِمُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾

(43-79) Have they contrived some scheme? [63] If so, We too will contrive a scheme.

(63) The allusion is to the plans that the chiefs of the Quraish were devising in their secret assemblies in order to take a decisive action against the Prophet (peace be upon him).

اَمْ يَحْسَبُوْنَ اَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَ نَجْوٰىهُمْ ؕ بَلٰى وَ رُسُلُنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

(43-80) Or do they think that We do not hear their secret talks and their whispering counsels? Yes, indeed We do and Our messengers [i.e., angels) are with them, writing.

قُلْ اِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ وَلَدٌ ۖ فَاَنَا اَوَّلُ الْعٰبِدِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

(43-81) Say: “If the Merciful One had a son, I would have been the first one to worship him.” [64]

(64) It means: My rejection of somebody's being God's offspring and my refusal to worship those whom you regard as His offspring is not due to any stubbornness and obduracy. My reason for the refusal is only this that God has no son or daughter, and your such beliefs are against the reality; otherwise I am such a faithful servant of my Lord that if at all the reality had been the same as you state I would have submitted myself in worship before you.

سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(43-82) Exalted be the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne, above what they attribute to Him.

فَذَرْهُمْ يَخُوْضُوْا وَ يَلْعَبُوْا حَتّٰى يُلٰقُوْا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِيْ يُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

(43-83) So leave them alone to indulge in their vanities and to frolic about until they encounter that Day of theirs against which they have been warned.

وَ هُوَ الَّذِيْ فِى السَّمَآءِ اِلٰهٌ وَّ فِى الْاَرْضِ اِلٰهٌ ؕ وَ هُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٨٤﴾

(43-84) He it is Who is God in the heavens and the earth. He is the Most Wise, the All-Knowing. (65)

(65) That is, the gods of the heavens and the earth are not separate, but there is only One God of the entire universe. It is His wisdom that is working in the whole system of the universe and only He has the knowledge of all realities.

وَ تَبٰرَكَ الَّذِيْ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ وَ عِنْدَهٗ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ ۚ وَ اِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

(43-85) Blessed is He Who has dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. (66) With Him is the knowledge of the Hour; and to Him you shall all be sent back. (67)

(66) That is, He is far above it that another should be His associate in Godhead and may have any share whatsoever in ruling this great universe. Whatever is there in the earth and the heavens, whether the Prophets, the saints, the angels, jinn, spirits, stars or planets, they are His servants and slaves and subjects. It is impossible for them to be characterized with a divine attribute or be possessed with a divine power.

(67) That is, you may have taken anyone as your helper and patron in the world, but after death you will have to face only One God and render an account of your deeds before Him alone.

وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِ الشَّفٰعَةَ اِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

(43-86) Those whom they call upon, instead of Allah have no power of intercession, except such that testify to the truth based on knowledge. (68)

(68) This sentence has several meanings:

(1) Those whom the people have made their deities in the world, will not at all be their intercessors before Allah. Those of them who were wicked, will themselves be presented as culprits there. However, those who had borne witness to the truth by virtue of knowledge (and not unconsciously) will certainly be able to intercede for others.

(2) Those who will be permitted to intercede, will be able to do so only for those who had testified to the truth consciously (and not heedlessly). They will neither intercede of their own will, nor will have the permission to intercede for anyone who had gone and been led astray from the truth in the world, or had been affirming the faith in Allah as the only Deity unconsciously as well as serving other deities at the same time

(3) If a person says that those whom he has made gods necessarily possess the powers of intercession, and they wield such an influence with Allah that they can have anyone they like forgiven, irrespective of his beliefs and deeds, is totally wrong. No one enjoys such a position with Allah. If the one who claims that

another has such powers of intercession can testify to the truth of this matter by virtue of knowledge, one should have the courage to say so. But if one is not in a position to bear such a testimony, and he is certainly not, it would be sheer folly to invent such a creed on the basis of mere hearsay or conjecture and risk his life Hereafter relying only on an imaginary support.

Incidentally, this verse also gives two important principles:

First, it shows that bearing a testimony to the truth without knowledge may be reliable in the world, but it is not so before Allah. In the world, whoever affirms the faith verbally will be regarded as a Muslim and treated as such unless he openly commits an act expressly contradictory to belief. But as before Allah only such a one will be counted as a Muslim, who has uttered Lailaha ill Allah consciously, with full understanding of what he is denying and what he is affirming according to his best knowledge.

Secondly, it gives this principle of the law of evidence that knowledge is a pre-requisite of bearing the evidence. If the bearer of an evidence has no knowledge of the event to which he is bearing evidence, his evidence is meaningless. The same is borne out by a decision given by the Prophet (peace be upon him). He said to a witness: If you saw what happened with your own eyes as you are seeing the sun, then you may bear the witness, otherwise not. (Ahkam al- Quran by al Jassas).

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

(43-87) If you were to ask them: “Who created them?” they will surely say: “Allah.” (69) Whence are they, then, being led astray?

(69) This verse has two meanings:

(1) If you ask them who has created them, they will say: Allah.

(2) If you ask them who is the Creator of their gods, they will say: Allah.

وَ قِيۡلِهٖ يٰرَبِّ اِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوۡمٌ لَّا يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ ﴿۸۸﴾

(43-88) We call to witness the cry of the Messenger: “O Lord, these are a people not wont to believe!” (70)

(70) This is one of the most difficult verses of the Quran as it involves the complicated syntactic question of the kind of waw that has been used in wa qili-hi. From the translation of Shah Abdul Qadir it appears that the waw here is not conjunctive but for taking oath, and is related to fa-anna yu-fakun, and the pronoun in qili-hi turns to the Prophet (peace be upon him) of Allah. Therefore, the verse means this: By this saying of the Messenger: O my Lord, these are a people who would not believe. They are so utterly deluded that although they themselves admit that Allah alone is their Creator and Creator of their gods, yet they abandon the Creator and persist in worshiping His creatures. The object of swearing by this saying of the Messenger is that the conduct of the people clearly shows that they are, in fact, stubborn, for the foolishness of their attitude is apparent from their own admission, and such an irrational attitude can be adopted only by such a person, who is resolved not to believe. In other words, the oath implies: The Messenger has rightly said so: indeed these people would not believe.

فَاصۡفَحۡ عَنۡهُمۡ وَ قُلۡ سَلٰمٌ ؕ فَسَوۡفَ يَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۸۹﴾

(43-89) Indulge them, (O Prophet), and say to them: “Peace to you.” (71) For soon they shall come to know.

(71) That is, you should neither curse them for their scornful words and attitude of mockery and derision, nor respond with harsh words, just wish them well and take your leave.